

# What is “Abortion Pill Reversal”?

Unproven. Unethical. Bad Faith Medicine.

Since 2015, several states have introduced, passed, and enacted dangerous legislation to force doctors to inform patients about the possibility of reversing a medication abortion through abortion pill reversal.

The following states signed abortion pill reversal counseling bills into law from 2015 to 2019: Arizona, Arkansas, South Dakota, Indiana, Utah, Idaho, Oklahoma, and most recently, North Dakota.

After Gov. Doug Burgum (R-ND) signed a so-called reversal bill into law in June 2019, the American Medical Association initiated a lawsuit to block the bill from taking effect.

The American Medical Association (AMA) is joined by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and other medical groups in its criticism of abortion pill reversal, and the laws that force counseling about it on patients.

The idea of so-called abortion pill reversal is an attack on abortion rights, free speech for doctors who practice real medicine, and the dignity of all people who have decided to have an abortion.

What’s more, there’s no proof that this speculative treatment proposed by anti-abortion activists actually works.

“Abortion Pill Reversal”  
=  
Bad Faith  
Medicine

When prescribed, abortion with pills works like this: A person takes a first medication, mifepristone, which blocks progesterone from reaching a pregnancy that had been developing. Then, a person takes a second medication, misoprostol, which causes the uterus to contract. So, abortion opponents invented a theory: After a person who has decided to have an abortion with pills takes the first medication, mifepristone, anti-abortion activists can "reverse" the abortion by administering large amounts of progesterone, using non-standardized dosages and methods. Then the person is instructed not to take misoprostol. [1]

Without regard for safety, abortion opponents have not bothered to put their theory of abortion pill reversal to accepted methods of scientific testing and review. Instead, they have experimented on people without fully informing them they are subjects in an experiment, joining a troubling history in the United States of non-consensual medical experimentation especially targeting people of color.

The anti-abortion movement contends the sexist idea that women are indecisive and incapable of making decisions. In reality, research has shown 99 percent of women who have abortions do not regret them. [2] The creator of “abortion pill reversal”, George Delgado, has been barred by the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine from including his previous volunteer affiliation with the school on his list of credentials. [3] The University’s decision to distance itself from Delgado’s harmful, scientifically unfounded body of work speaks volumes about the absolute lack of credibility for this theory.

In their suit against the North Dakota law, the AMA wrote: “The Compelled Reversal Mandate forces physicians to tell their patients that medication abortions may be reversible, a claim wholly unsupported by the best, most reliable scientific evidence, contravening their ethical and legal obligations as medical providers.” [4]

#### Sources:

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2. <https://www.guttmacher.org/evidence-you-can-use/mandatory-counseling-abortion>
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